

Technical Standards for FSU Coordinated Program in Dietetics

Introduction and Purpose

The Framingham State University Coordinated Program in Dietetics (CPD) is committed to providing equal opportunities for all students who can satisfy academic and performative requirements, including the technical standards described herein of the CPD.

The Department of Nutrition and Health Studies has responsibility for the following for the CPD: the selection of students; the design, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum; the evaluation of student progress; and the determination of who should be awarded a Verification Statement and Master of Science (MS) degree. In evaluating candidates, CPD faculty evaluate candidates holistically, to ensure that the candidate can complete the essential academic and learning objectives required for graduation. As part of the CPD supervised practice, students are placed at off-campus clinical, community, food service, and school sites. Many of the program learning objectives for the CPD are completed at these sites, and thus program requirements include satisfaction of both didactic and clinical skills evidenced in classroom and practical settings. Candidates must be able to assimilate and engage with detailed and complex information presented through both the didactic curriculum and supervised practice coursework

The program is undifferentiated, which means graduates are provided with broad general knowledge in all fields of dietetics and the basic skills and competence requisite for the practice of dietetics. The curriculum is necessary for the development of such knowledge and skills for entry-level dietetics professionals so that graduates will possess the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of dietetics situations and to render a wide spectrum of dietetics care. The intention of an individual candidate to practice only a narrow part of clinical dietetics or to pursue a non-clinical dietetics career does not alter the requirement that all CPD students achieve competence in the full curriculum required by the program. Students must demonstrate achievement of all requirements of an Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)-accredited education program to complete the CPD, receive a Verification Statement, and to write the registration examination for dietitians/nutritionists. These are competencies that are required for entry-level practice.

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A candidate for the MS-CPD degree must have abilities and skills in five categories, including A. Observation; B. Communication; C. Motor Functioning; D. Intellectual-Conceptual Skills, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities; and E. Behavioral Attributes, Social Skills, and Professional Expectations. Candidates must be able to perform the requisite skills in an independent manner with or without reasonable accommodation*.

A. Observational Skills

Candidates must be able to utilize visual acuity and auditory acuity to observe patients in a clinical setting, utilize quantity foods production equipment, and other software/hardware/equipment at supervised practice sites.

B. Communication Skills

Candidates must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with clients, patients, students, their families, health care personnel, colleagues, faculty, staff, and all other individuals with whom they come in contact. Candidates must be able to interpret non-verbal aspects of communication and establish therapeutic relationships with the aforementioned client and profession base. Candidates must be able to record information accurately, both in typed and hand-written documentation, operation of a digital software programs utilized by sites, and effectively communicate verbally and in writing with other professionals in a variety of settings.

C. Motor Functions

Candidates must possess sufficient physical mobility, coordination of both gross and fine neuromuscular functions and equilibrium to perform required diagnostic techniques. Candidates must possess the ability to move heavy equipment and food products up to 40 pounds, operate controls on machinery, stand for a minimum of 2 hours, walk for a minimum of 6 hours, not necessarily consecutively, and stoop, bend, or twist for a minimum of 30 minutes at a time and the ability to repeat this activity at frequent intervals.

D. Intellectual-Conceptual Skills, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

Candidates are expected to possess the abilities to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize/interpret, and transmit information quickly and efficiently in both remote and in-person situations, both verbally and in writing. In addition, candidates must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships, to understand the spatial relationships of structures and to adapt to different learning environments and modalities. Candidates must be able to learn, participate, collaborate, and contribute as part of an interdisciplinary team effectively. Candidates must be able to interpret information and make accurate, fact-based conclusions based on available data and information. Candidates must be able to formulate a hypothesis, investigate the potential answers and outcomes and formulate appropriate and accurate conclusions and interventions.

E. Behavioral Attributes, Social Skills, and Professional Expectations

Candidates must exhibit sufficient maturity and emotional stability for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, which includes, but is not limited to, the exercise of good judgement and the prompt completion of all responsibilities. Candidates must consistently exhibit integrity,

honesty, professionalism, and compassion, and are expected to display a spirit of cooperation and teamwork. Candidates must interact with clients, patients, students, families, health care personnel, colleagues, faculty, preceptors, staff, and all other individuals with whom they encounter in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner. Candidates must accept responsibility for learning and exercising good judgement and are expected to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments, accept constructive feedback from others and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes consistently. Candidates must possess the physical and emotional endurance to tolerate demanding workloads, to function in a competent and professional manner in high stress fast-paced situations and to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility and manage the uncertainties intrinsic in a variety of dynamic work settings and the healthcare system. Candidates must possess the ability to understand and adopt behavioral professional standards into classroom and practicum settings; must be able to work effectively as a team member; and must be able to receive feedback from instructors and preceptors and adjust performance accordingly.

*Academic Accommodations approved by FSU CASA for classroom environments may not apply to internship/practicum work. Accommodations may not alter fundamental requirements of the curriculum and may not be granted retroactively. FSU's process to provide reasonable accommodations is described at: <https://www.framingham.edu/academics/center-for-academic-success-and-achievement/disability-access-services/index>